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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Radio Service
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

HOMEMAKERS' CHAT Thursday, May 15, 1941.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "MAY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS." Information from the Bureaus of Home Economics and Animal Industry, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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The housewife's problems follow the calendar. We can almost tell what month it is by looking in the mailbag. Graduation dresses, strawberry preserves, and eggs are all May time topics, on which the Bureaus of Home Economics and Animal Industry have supplied our information.

A mother writes: "My older daughter is graduating from college in June. She will wear an academic robe over her dress. The high school daughter has an evening graduation and wants a long dress. I'd like to make both of these dresses of cotton fabrics. Which are the best materials in each case?"

Cotton is an excellent choice for either dress, the Bureau of Home Economics says. The college girl can wear any simple, tailored style of white dress under an academic robe, just so it does not make her look bulky. But remember that in June these robes are often uncomfortably warm. So buy the coolest, smoothest material you can, such as fine cotton broadcloth. Piqué, gabardine, and various nubby cottons are also good if not too heavy.

Now about the billowy long evening dress for the younger daughter. Organdie is one of the nicest cottons for such a dress, which this girl undoubtedly expects to wear later on to summer parties. There are crinkled and shadow-printed organdies as well as plain ones. All of these are finished to stay crisp permanently.

Then although it's not as crisp as organdie, sheer lawn is suitable for a graduation dress with lacy trimmings. There's a new starchless finish which makes lawn look like new even after it's laundered. Or your daughter might like voile,

for a dress with soft lines. The new crease-resistant finishes keep voile from looking limp and sleazy after it's worn.

Both graduation dresses will need cotton slips,-- broadcloth with a silky feel. And do remind the girls that if white hose are called for, they can get lovely sheer white lisle stockings designed by the Bureau of Home Economics to wear with the tailored dress, and lacy net evening hose to go with the other.

Our next letter writer asks about making strawberry sun preserves. The jelly expert in the Bureau of Home Economics says that it is a mistake to start sun preserves unless you can count on enough hot sunshine for several days to cause rapid evaporation.

However, here are her directions if you decide to go ahead:

Sort out the large firm berries to use whole, and reserve the smaller less perfect ones for making sirup. Wash and cap the berries. Crush the small ones, stir and cook for 3 minutes, and strain. Weigh the big berries. For each pound of selected berries allow 1 cup of sugar, 1 teaspoon of lemon juice, and 1/2 cup of strained juice. Heat the juice and sugar slowly to make a sirup. Drop in the whole strawberries and simmer from 3 to 5 minutes. Drain the berries from the sirup, and place them about an inch apart on shallow enameled pans or china platters.

Now boil the sirup until it is fairly thick. That will take about 10 minutes or until the sirup thermometer, if you have one, reads 221 degrees Fahrenheit. Skim off any scum, add the lemon juice, and pour the sirup in a thin layer over the strawberries. Cover the pans or platters with window glass, propped up about one-fourth of an inch. Place the pans of berries in the sun for 2 or 3 days, or until the sirup has jellied. Take the pans indoors every night. After each day's sunning turn the berries over carefully. When the preserves are thick enough you can put them into hot sterilized jars and seal, without reheating them.

We jump now from jam to eggs. The question is how to feed hens in a home flock so that the eggs will have a high vitamin content.

Poultry specialists of the Bureau of Animal Industry say that you give different feeds according to the vitamin you wish to increase. For example, to increase vitamin A, feed cod-liver oil, certain other fish oils, alfalfa leaf meal, alfalfa meal, and yellow corn. Dried yeast is one of the richest sources of vitamin $B_1$. Oil-seed meals, wheat middlings, and whole grain cereals, are also good feeds for supplying vitamin $B_1$.

The better sources of vitamin G in feeds are dried whey, dried buttermilk, dried skim milk, alfalfa leaf meal, fish meal, and good meat scrap. To increase the vitamin D content of eggs, feed fish-oils-- cod-liver oil, sardine oil, and certain other fish oils, especially in winter. During the spring, summer, and autumn, chickens on range generally get a good supply of vitamin D from sunshine.

There is not necessarily any direct connection, between the color of the egg yolk and the amount of vitamin A value it contains, but many people have a prejudice one way or the other. Hens that get a diet low in pigments but high in fish-liver oil will have light-colored yolks rich in vitamin A. Again, rich shades of yellow yolks result from diets containing an abundance of yellow corn and 5 to 10 percent alfalfa leaf products. You can get deep orange-red yolks by feeding a diet containing from half to 2 percent of ground pimiento pepper or chili pepper. Fresh green feed also tends to increase the color of the yolks. If you have customers who insist on eggs with light-colored yolks, confine the chickens in laying houses or bare yards, and give them some other grain than yellow corn, and feed very little alfalfa meal or alfalfa leaf meal, but plenty of fish-liver oil for high vitamin A content. But where it is necessary to depend on home-grown feeds, you may be able to educate the customers to like the highly colored yolks!

We've reached the end of our time. More questions and answers next week.

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